

# *Range Plants*

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**Grade Level:** 4,5,6

**Subject:** Science

**Duration:** 45 minutes

**Description:** The purpose of this lesson is to make students aware of the importance of range plants. They will learn how to identify grass vs. forbs.

**Goals:**

1. Students will gain an appreciation of range plants.
2. Student will learn about the effects of grazing on the range.
3. Students will learn about grasses vs. forbs.
4. Students will learn about annual and perennial.

**Objectives:**

1. The students will identify 4 grasses vs. forbs.
2. Students will write about the effects of overgrazing.

**Materials:**

1. Paper and pencil
2. Grasses
3. Forbs

**Vocabulary:**

1. Grasses: parallel-veined leaves with two parts; a flat bladelike portion and sheath which enclose the stem. Example: Bluebunch Wheatgrass
2. Forbs: a palatable, broad-leaved, flowering herbaceous plant whose stem does not become woody. Example: Dandelion

**Procedure:**

1. Discuss the differences between grass and forbs
2. Take a field trip outdoors and have students find and pull four grasses and four forbs.
3. Have students write and identify which are grasses and which are forbs. Hang the samples in the classroom upside down to dry.
4. Have students look at pictures or pressed plants that are native to the state. Identify if they are grasses or forbs.
5. Discuss the differences of annuals and perennials.  
Annuals: Plants living one year or less. During this time the plant grows, flowers, produces seeds and dies. Example: green beans  
Perennials: A plant that lives more than two years. Knapweed

6. Discuss grazing effects on range or land. Students will make a chart of the good or bad.

Good:

1. Cattle- reseed and fertilize with proper management

Bad:

1. If cattle eat the grasses too close to the ground (overgraze) the native plants can be lost.

2. Weeds can invade (spotted knapweed)

3. Soil erosion occurs

7. No grass-no cattle-loss of money today as well as 1800's

**Assessment:** The student will collect four grasses and four forbs and be able to tell the Differences. The student will make a comparison chart of the effects of grazing.